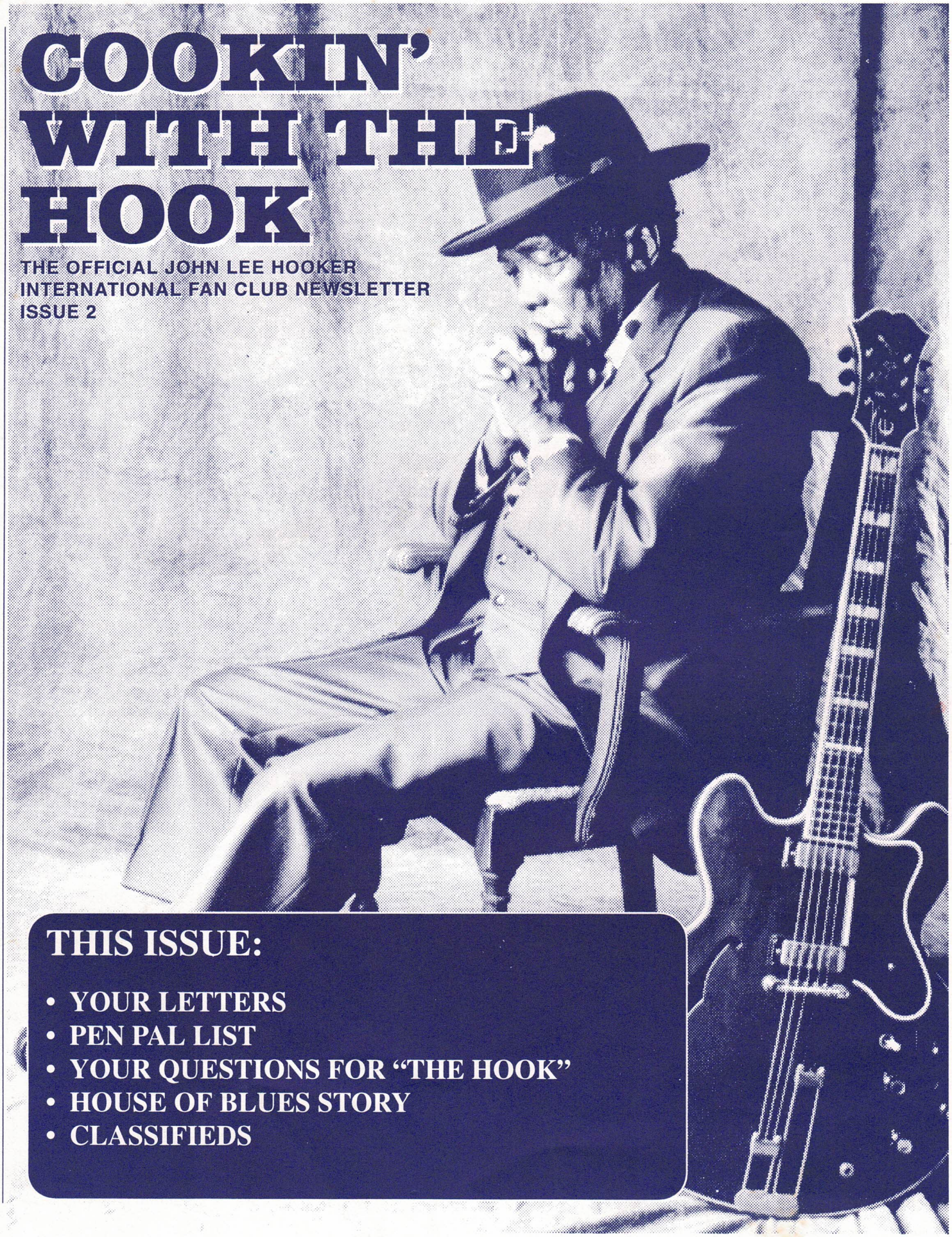
COOKIN' WITH THE HOOK

THE OFFICIAL JOHN LEE HOOKER
INTERNATIONAL FAN CLUB NEWSLETTER
ISSUE 2



THIS ISSUE:

- YOUR LETTERS
- PEN PAL LIST
- YOUR QUESTIONS FOR "THE HOOK"
- HOUSE OF BLUES STORY
- CLASSIFIEDS

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ISSUE 2
VOLUME I
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Cover photo courtesy of Michael Collopy

Correction: My apologies...Our previous newsletter stated that John Lee's upcoming album, *Chill Out,* would be released in April or May of 1994. I am sorry if this information has caused any confusion. Look forward to *Chill Out* in early 1995.

As the end of 1994 comes near, I would like to thank all of you for your support. You have sent such wonderful things to John Lee and myself; cards, letters, CDs and cassettes, photographs, newspaper articles, interesting stories and inspiring thoughts. Thank you all so much! A very happy new year to all of you!

To bring in the New Year we have a special message from John Lee to all of his fans:

"May 1995 be a good year and keep on doin' the good things and lovin' people. If you're doin' wrong, then turn over a new leaf and start lovin' people. I love you and I always will. I love people I don't even know. May God bless you and keep on listenin' to the blues". John Lee Hooker

YOUR LETTERS

So often fans send special letters that contain special comments and thoughts. We receive so many wonderful letters, and although I can't print everything, I've selected a couple of my favorites:

Dear John Lee Hooker,

My name is Tetsuo Shimada. I Japanese. My favorite JOHN LEE HOOKER. Very big fan JOHN LEE HOOKER. Your music are always bitchin' and so are you! I listen to your Blues over and over everyday. There's so many things of life....trembing joy and pleasure, also sorrow and pain. When I'm in hurt and pain, frozen by cruel reality of life, distressed and heartbreaking, your BLUES still around me, being with me... comfort me, make me strong and encourage me. I got my life in front of me, along with you and your wonderful BLUES all the time! Please come and visit Japan sometime soon. All the Japanese fans are waiting to see you in person.

JOHN blues makes me high!
JOHN blues never fails to energize me!
JOHN blues makes me come alive!
John are always on my mind.

Thanks you very much. Best wishes.

T. Shimada,
Japan

To Whom It May Concern,

This is a poem I wrote when I saw John Lee Hooker in concert in June 1989. I don't know what the chances are of him ever seeing this, but just maybe... It would mean so much to me if he could see or hear this. So if it is at all within your power, or

desire to help me, please forward this to him. Thank you so much.

"Prophet of the Blues"
for John Lee Hooker

On a warm June day
I saw the man play,
Clad in a three piece suit,
The crowd fell mute,
As he raised his hands,
To the hypnotized fans.

The legend walked on stage,
Shedding those 72 years of age,
And returned to his home,
Where he felt so alone,
Slow and murmuring voice,
Lamenting a sad choice.

His big old hands caressed
The thick strings on his chest,
While his deep vibrating tone,
Let out a mournful moan.
Then he told us about the blues,
And how to heal our bad news.

But he wiped away a tear,
And in a voice so dear,
Swung into a new beat,
With only his tapping feet,
And his rough hands slapping,
That guitar was swinging.

The tired old Fender,
That seemed so tender,
Carried the tune so loud,
Over the stomping crowd,
He said, "put your hands together".
And my feet were like feathers.

Then with a heartfelt wave,
He moved off the stage,
With the roar of friends
That will never end,
Ringing in his traveled ears,
Of all those people,
All those years.

Leonard Roberto,
Connecticut, U.S.A.

PEN PAL LIST

We asked all of you if you would like to be a part of our pen pal list. Although, many fans preferred to keep their name and address confidential, we did get some eager participants. This list gives you a terrific opportunity to correspond with many other John Lee Hooker fans from all over the world. You can exchange letters, thoughts, memorabilia or even guitar licks!

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YOUR QUESTIONS FOR "THE HOOK"

These questions were submitted by you, the fans. My interviews with John Lee took place at his home in California. The following questions were submitted by Candice Smith (San Francisco, California), David Smith (Ontario, Canada), Michael Baker (Jackson, Tennessee), John Allan (Australia), Keith Smith (W. Paris, Maine), James Martin (Freeport, New York) and Gary Hearn (U.K.) I thank you all very much for sending them!

LG: Your record with Bonnie Raitt "I'm in the Mood" was really hot. Would you like to make another record with Bonnie?
JLH: Yes. The CD "I'm in the Mood", which was done once before as a hit, me and her came back and did it again as a hit. The great Bonnie Raitt who is a great friend of mine! I hope some day that we can do it again. We love each other and we'll never forget "I'm in the Mood For Love".

LG: Would you like to make a solo album (no band)?
JLH: Yes. I'm going to do that maybe in the future. Right now I've got no plans for that. I think a lot of people would want that.

LG: Is there anything in your life that you haven't done that you would like to do?
JLH: Yeah. A few things. I would like to just go around teaching young people the Blues which I got time now to do. I'm retired, at least semi-retired and I want to go around teaching the young people what the Blues is all about—my kind of Blues, the deep Blues and the roots where it comes from. I want to do that.

LG: Looking back over the large number of records you have made, are there any in particular that stand out or have a special memory for you?
JLH: Yes. A couple. I would say "Boogie Chillun" and "Boom Boom".

LG: Over the years you have made many records, have you a copy of every record you have made?
JLH: No. I could have, but I don't.

LG: Musically speaking, what period in your life was the most enjoyable and creative?
JLH: I've had so many enjoyable times in my life, millions, I can't pick out just one. I am blessed that I had so many good things in my life. Thank you for asking me that, but I can't answer.

LG: If you had to put a band together for one concert, who would you choose to be in your band (any musician living or deceased)?
JLH: The "Coast to Coast Blues Band" (my own band) and maybe Van Morrison, someone like that. There are a lot of people I'd love to have, but, I wouldn't have room for all of the people I'd love to have. I'd have a room full of people and more, but definitely my band and Eric Clapton too.

LG: We have a Blues project dealing with John Lee "Sonny Boy" Williamson who was born and buried here in Jackson, Tennessee. I've noticed that you've recorded several of Sonny Boy's songs and wondered how you came to choose the ones you have (Decoration Day, Bluebird, etc.) and what influence he had on your music?
JLH: They were the ones (songs) I really liked. I had a lot of feelin' for those songs when I did them. Kept 'em alive. I think they'll stay alive. He's gone but those songs I love. I think he had a great influence on my music. I knew him very well and he had a great influence on my music and I had a great influence on his.

LG: When you recorded "Women and Money" for Chess Records, why is the sound quality much different than earlier or later recordings on that label?
JLH: Well, as the times and the world goes by, things change. You've got different equipment , different sounds, different everything. So, nothin' stays the same, that's why it sounds different.

LG: Do you know Memphis Minnie and Charlie Christian?
JLH: They was good people and they was people that I know, used to play with—down to earth people, good, good Blues. Many people (women) do Memphis Minnies' tunes, so she was one of the greatest. She's gone (deceased), but she's not gone. She'll live on in her music. I love her.

LG: Do you think the current trend in Blues revival will continue, and if so, do you think it will have an impact on the future of music and how?
JLH: Yes, the Blues is here to stay and it's gonna get higher. The young people are really catching on to what the music is. They got feelings and the meaning of the music.

LG: What is the one thing in your life you most want to be remembered for?
JLH: John Lee Hooker really loves people. All people of all races.

LG: Who would like to record with that you have not?
JLH: Eric Clapton. I hope that can happen in the future.

LG: What memories do you have of your first visit to the United Kingdom?
JLH: 1962 was my first trip over there with Horrace Lipman from Germany. We toured all over with Memphis Slim, Willie Dixon, T-Bone Walker, Eddie Boyd, Shaky Jake and Big Mama Thorton. That was my first tour and I had a lot of fun. Those days I can't forget.

LG: How did you meet Howlin' Wolf?
JLH: I met him at a Blues club in Chicago.

LG: How do you go about writing a song?
JLH: I write as I think of things.

LG: Is "Whistlin' and Moanin" the only instance of you whistling on a track?
JLH: Yes, the only time.

JOHN LEE HOOKER CHILL OUT

courtesy of The Rosebud Agency

John Lee Hooker celebrates his 75th birthday in 1995 with the pointblank/Virgin release of *Chill Out*. This recording is Hooker's third since his triumphant comeback in 1989 with The Healer, which was a catalyst not only for John Lee Hooker's extraordinary success but for music audiences' renewed interest in the blues.

With a recording career that spans almost a half-century, Hooker is a rare surviving member of the group artists who brought the music of the Mississippi Delta to the north and then to the world, influencing virtually all of rock n' roll. His unique position in blues and rock history as a bridge between generations and musical genres is captured in *Chill Out*— a combination of raw acoustic songs representative of his delta roots and collaborations with modern masters such as Carlos Santana and Van Morrison.

As Hooker has now declared his retirement from touring, this may be our best opportunity yet to hear the breadth of his work; *Chill Out* showcases his trademark hypnotic vocals and inimitable guitar work throughout.

The album's title track, "*Chill Out* (Things Gonna Change), " was recorded with Carlos Santana and his band. It is fitting that Santana, a consistent supporter and friend who worked with Hooker on "The Healer" and *Mr. Lucky's* "Stripped Me Naked", is featured prominently on the title track of *Chill Out*. Five years after the recording of *The Healer,* which represented Hooker's triumphant return to the scene, "Chill Out (Things Gonna Change)" sets the pace for the new album.

Chill Out again sees Hooker reworking a few of his classics including a remake of his haunting "Tupelo". The actual recording session was captured on film by England's acclaimed 'South Bank Show' as part of their recent documentary on the blues legend.

Famed R & B pianist Charles Brown brings his band, featuring guitarist Danny Caron, to the party for the new song "Annie Mae" as well as a version of Brook Benton's 1959 hit "Kiddio" which features John Lee singing his favorite song in an uncharacteristically upbeat style.

Hooker's range as a songwriter and performer is evident when comparing the stark instrumentation and music of "Deep Blue Sea" and "If You've Never Been In Love" with the rockin' "One Bourbon, One Scotch, One Beer" (covered successfully by George Thorogood in the late '70's) which Hooker and members of his long-time road group cut loose on.

Hooker continues his 45-year plus songwriting tenure with more new songs—"Women On My Mind," "Too Young" and "Talkin' The Blues." While the subjects range from heartbreak to life on the road as a musician, the sparse guitar style and quiet strength of his voice recall the music of the Mississippi Delta where he was born.

Van Morrison and John Lee Hooker's rapport in "Medley: Serves Me Right To Suffer/Syndicator" is evidence of a friendship which has lasted over a quarter-century and was first committed to record on John Lee's ABC recording, *Never Get Out Of These Blues Alive*. Van, who credits John Lee as one of his earliest influences, has been an enthusiastic participant throughout many stages of John Lee's musical career, and Hooker was recently able to return the favor with duets on the classic "Gloria" on Morrisons's *Too Long In Exile* and *One Night In San Francisco* in addition to an appearance in the 1990 video, 'Van Morrison-The Concert.'

"We'll Meet Again" is a previously neglected chestnut that features Hooker's vocals. The song was initially released on his 1986 Grammy nominated *Jealous* album, currently out of print.

Chill Out was recorded in the San Francisco Bay Area, Hooker's home for the past 25 years. Guitarist and producer Roy Rogers continues in his role as producer of most of the tracks Hooker recorded in the past five years. The project was again coordinated by manager Mike Kappus who conceived and financed *The Healer* and coordinated producers and guests on that album as well as *Mr. Lucky, Boom Boom* and *Chill Out*.

MY TRIP TO THE HOUSE OF BLUES

(Not to be confused with "How I Spent My Summer Vacation")

By: Lynn Goldfinger

(On April 30th I had the wonderful opportunity of accompanying John Lee Hooker to the grand opening of the "House of Blues" in Los Angeles, California— a night I would never forget!)

We leave John Lee's home in Long Beach, California with a group of John Lee's friends and relatives. In his black stretch limosine, with "The Healer" CD as background music, we head for the club.

Upon arrival we are led through the back door of the "House of Blues", Dan Akroyd's new nightclub on West Hollywood's Sunset Boulevard. The exterior of the club is a Delta-style barn covered with corrugated tin imported directly from Clarksdale, Mississippi, the birthplace of the "Boogie Man". We are escorted by employees of the club and directed to the elaborately decorated private rooms backstage.

It is the club's official opening, an AIDS benefit for the Magic Johnson Foundation. The place is crawling with celebrities. Robert DeNiro, Bruce Springsteen, Ted Danson, Herbie Hancock, John Fogerty, Booker T and Steven Spielberg are some of the many people shmoozing and eagerly awaiting the show to begin. I personally meet Magic Johnson (only for a second), as well as "Elwood Blues" aka Dan Akroyd. I hand Akroyd a John Lee Hooker t-shirt and his eyes light up! "Thanks a lot" he says, as he hands the shirt to his bodyguard, "don't lose this." John Lee sits in his dressing room and greets the many people that are eager to see him. Everyone from Magic Johnson to Charlie Musselwhite pass through his dressing room. In the background on the TV monitors we watch Isaac Hayes start the show off with his famous "Shaft".

It is so crowded that we hardly manage to get down to the stage. Off to the side of the stage Akroyd is scurrying around saying "all the band in sunglasses, all the band in sunglasses, let's go!" , as he prepares his band, "The Blues Brothers" to accompany John Lee for the next set. The "Blues Brothers Band" enthusiastically goes out onto the stage and starts boogying. To begin, Akroyd calls Jim Belushi onstage , the actual blood brother of "Jake" (John Belushi) and they perform a version of "Sweet Home Chicago". For the next hour Akroyd sings and blows harmonica while Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown comes on. Immediately following, John Lee joins the "Blues Brothers Band" with an awesome version of "Boom Boom" that brings the house down! The music keeps coming until "The Godfather of Soul", James Brown is the last in the line-up of performers. Brown performs his finest for close to two hours. We are pleasantly surprised when Bruce Springsteen, Magic Johnson, Woody Harrelson, Bobby Brown and virtually every celebrity left join Brown's band on the stage to close the evening with a lively rendition of "Get It Up". The joint is jumping!

Well, after a magnificent night, it is time to go home.....

(I encourage all of you Blues lovers to try to visit a "House Of Blues" club. Clubs are located in Los Angeles, Boston and New Orleans with more to come. The acts are superb!) —F.Y.I. In case any of you don't know, you can see John Lee in the movie "The Blues Brothers" released in 1980 and available on video.

CLASSIFIEDS.. CLASSIFIEDS...

This section is to buy, sell or trade your John Lee memorabilia. Anythings from records to photos. Advertising is free to all members. PLEASE submit all classifieds to Healer Productions. If anyone out there has questions or comments they need answering, please let me know!!

RARE BLUES RECORDINGS, Live FM shows, photos available.
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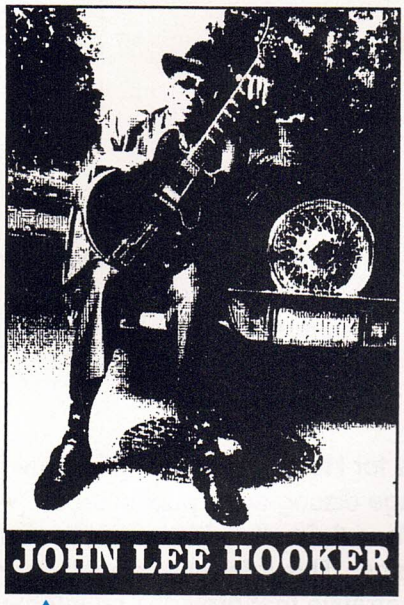

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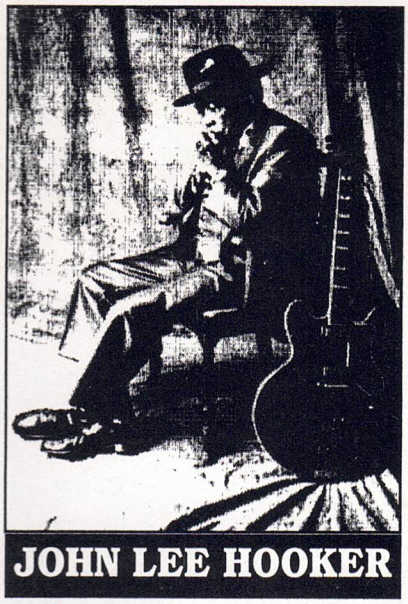

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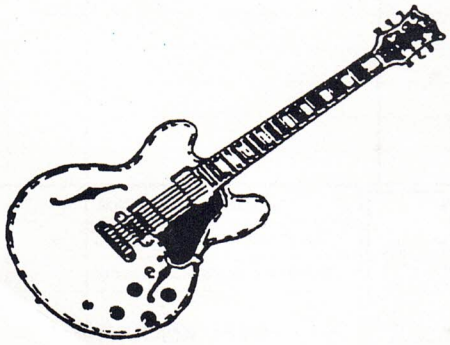

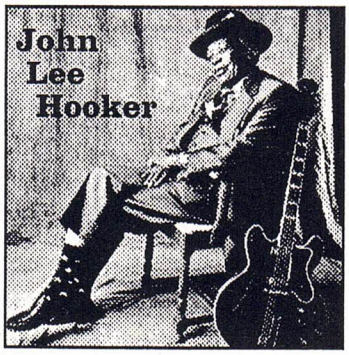

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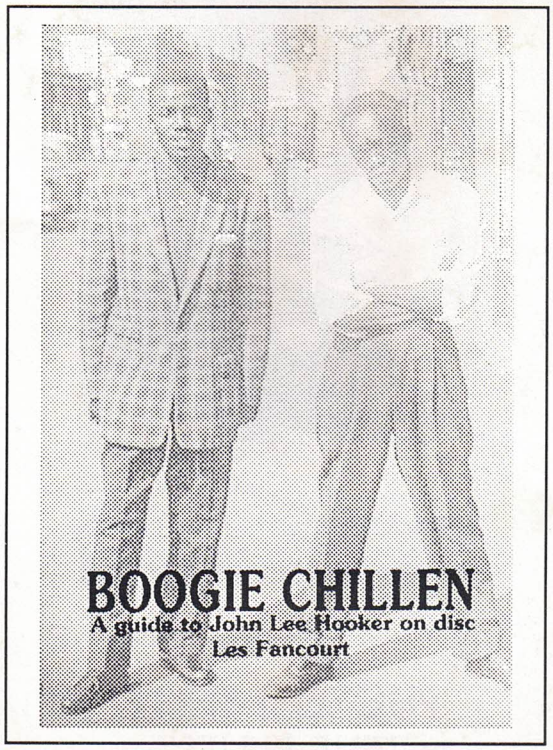

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Limited Edition

Boogie Chillen: A Guide To John Lee Hooker On Disc
By: Les Fancourt
Blues & Rhythm, The Gospel Truth, 1993 England

Indispensable for Hooker fanatics! This limited edition, 62 page discography published by England's, *Blues & Rhythm Magazine*, is a must for true Hooker fans. This informative book opens with a four-page narrative that provides an interesting overview of Hooker's career. It then lays out, in traditional discographical format, his studio history. Given the massive size of John Lee Hooker's recorded catalog, and the myriad pseudonyms he used, this book represents the state of the art in documenting John Lee Hooker's prolific career.

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